1: Raswan T-3 (1913-35) 1947 MD4 Rwala MD4

Roasted, I found them more palatable; crisp outside, and inside something like tender spinach. In neither case did they taste at all like meat. They are clean animals and as food not at all unpleasant, but one soon gets very tired of them, when one has to eat nothing else day after day.

All round the camp and all day long smoke screens were kept going, into which women and children drove the locusts. Next morning mountains of these insects lay drying in the sun, and when we left this camp site a few days later, there was not an empty sack or saddle-bag, and our camels carried gigantic loads of the dried insects. Men and women, dogs and camels, fed on them —but only for a few days; after that, they turned one's stomach. But what was left was carefully preserved for other and leaner times, for when the locusts swarm in vast numbers, one can safely predict drought and famine.

As we followed in the wake of these marauders, we found the land stripped bare; every bit of herbage had disappeared under their greedy maws. But I came to realize that the "plague of locusts" is not so utterly devastating in the desert as it is to the tillers of the soil in Transjordania, Palestine, and Egypt. In the desert it is a great blessing for all creatures. Buzzards, ravens, bustards and other desert game-birds fattened on the locusts, and flocks of storks trailed after the red clouds. Even to the human desert-dwellers they may be most useful. Faris told me that tens of thousands of Bedouins had to subsist for weeks on locusts alone, and that at times their camels and horses too can have no other fodder. During four-days' march northward—forty-five

2:Musil S-4,5 (no date)1928 MD4 Rwala MD4

destroyed. In the afternoons and evenings the young people hasten to the water holes, *ṛudrân*, in the valley bottoms for their ablutions. They bathe separately, the youths in one place, the girls in another. Their shouts of joy and various songs are heard on all sides. In the tents mushrooms and truffles, young bulbs, and fresh vegetables are cooked and enjoyed.

The local name for the mushrooms is *hawbar*. They grow after warm night rains, *emṭer bel-lejl w-râḥ jaṭaǧanna-l-hawbar*. On the mornings following such nights both men and women go out in search of this dainty, which grows best of all near the channels, while the truffle prefers soil mixed or strewn with sand. When they come to the surface the latter form tiny hat-like lumps, which attract the eye of the picker. The earth or sand covering them is then turned over by the hand or a stick, and the truffle dug out. In cooking they are boiled in salt water and then served with butter or camel's fat. Another method is to bake them in hot ashes after a thorough salting.

Of the truffle, *faḳa'*, there are three kinds: *al-čema*, *az-zbejdi*, and *al-ḫlâṣi*. A Bedouin, having gathered a heap of truffles, sorted them in his tent according to their kinds, saying: "This one is *al-čmajje*, the mother of the little girl will get that; this *az-zbejdi* I will give to the mother of my little son; and the best, *al-ḫlâṣi*, I shall keep myself; *al-čmajje lumm al-bnajje az-zbejdi lumm wlejdi al-ḫlâṣi larâsi*."

All Bedouins greatly enjoy the small bulbs of certain wild plants, especially *aṭ-ṭiṭa*, *rubaḥla*, *karrâṯ*, etc. Mothers send their boys in search of them with the words: "My little sons, O sonnies! go bring me *aṭ-ṭiṭa*; I will prepare for you *muṭiṭa* (a dish of mashed bulbs); *'ejâli jâ 'ejâl aṭ-ṭiṭa w-muṭlekom muṭiṭa*."

In the sun-baked gravel plains (called *ḥamâd*) in a year of abundance the *semḥ* grows with its subvarieties, *al-da'â'* and *al-ḥawwa*. These plants, when already ripe and still fresh are much sought after by the Bedouins, who place them in pits safe from water or in bags. When dry the plants are beaten with sticks and shaken, and the seed, *če'ber*, which have fallen to the ground, are put into sacks, *'edûl*, and brought to rain-water holes, where they are either left for some time or at least thoroughly soaked until the dry husks crack. Sometimes the large leather water troughs, *ḥowz*, are filled with water and the full shells are put in; in time they swell and burst.

2:Musil S-4, 5 (no date) 1928 MD4 Rwala MD4

The chaff, *ḳišr*, which floats on the top is then thrown away, while the clean seed are spread on blankets and allowed to dry. Or the Bedouins lay the filled sacks when still moist in the sun, shake them until the seed fall to the bottom, throw away the chaff, and clean the seed once more, so that they may serve as an article of food in a poor season. This is called *semḥne* or *sebib*.

The fertility, or abundance, *rabī'*, depends entirely on a luxuriant growth of the grasses, or annuals, not on that of the woody plants, or perennials. The latter become green even after a good *ṣejfi* rain, when the earth is well watered, *maṣ-ǰûfa*; but no *ṣejfi* rain can relieve the annuals, for the heat of the sun soon burns them. In the same year one tribe may have no *rabī'* at all, while another tribe, even a neighboring one, has abundance of everything. This difference is the more noticeable when the tribes are enemies. Of such a year they say: "This year has queer teeth; men live well (have something to bite into), and men die of hunger; *ḥâḍi-s-sene w-laka mûn nâs ja'îšûn w-nâs jemûtûn.*" The Bedouin also refers to a *rabī' al-mâl*, meaning a season when the entire growth consists of solitary grass patches insufficient to feed even the youngest camels; a *rabī' aṣ-ṣafâra*, when nothing grows except the *ṣafâra* with its yellow blossoms; a *rabī' ad-dimne*, when the grasses, though they may have sprouted and grown luxuriantly after the *wasm* and *šitwi* rains, fail to receive the *smâḳ* rain and become yellow as early as the end of March; a *rabī' an-naǰûn*, when all the plains and lowlands are thickly carpeted with grass; and, finally, a *rabī' aṣ-ṣaḥa*, when not only the lowlands but all the slopes, as well, afford luxuriant pasture.

Just as the Bedouins long for the *rabī'* years, so they fear the years of want, or *ǧeme'*. If for two or three years the rains in the autumn months have not been copious enough there are no grasses and the camels must live on the woody plants alone. The winter rain, *aš-šitwi*, makes these perennials swell, but during the hot *smâḳ* days they dry up, become unpalatable to the camels, and thus the actual *ajjâm aš-ǧeme'*, or days of want, set in, a period in which many camels perish. But if the rains of the *ṣejfi* also fail, then not a single perennial shoots up, last year's offshoots fall to pieces, to be broken and scattered by the wind, and the region soon changes into

354 When the tent owner has sat down with his guests, he calls to his sons or slaves: "Dig out the fireplace, *ehefrú lan-nár*." With the more important chiefs the fireplace is always dug by a slave, who is entrusted with the preparation of the coffee. The fireplace consists of a rectangular or circular hole about twenty centimeters deep, from the size and form of which it is possible years afterwards to judge with certainty to which chief the tent belonged. It is dug with an implement called *fáz*, which at one end terminates in a mattock and at the other end in a hatchet and is fastened on a long wooden helve; the double hoe, having at one end a mattock and at the other a pick, is called *ḥaddám* or *ṭubal*. The ordinary Rwejli digs a smaller fireplace, which is nearer the front edge of the tent. In the cold season the fireplace is close to the carpets for the guests, while in the hot season it is about the middle of the men's compartment. The clay which is dug out is thrown into a heap near the hole forming the fireplace, *ḥafrat an-nár*, and just below the edge of the tent. On it are shaken the ashes from the fireplace. The larger this heap, known as *nefile*, the more hospitable is the owner of the tent, for coffee is prepared for the guests on the fireplace in the men's compartment only and beside the fire the guests may warm themselves. Beside the fireplace is placed a pile of fuel, consisting of dry roots and stalks of various plants, *ḥaṭab*, and dry camels' excrements. The best fuel is the dry wood of the *ḍaḍ'* shrubs. It gives off scarcely any smoke, throws out a great heat, and holds the glowing embers for several hours before subsiding. The worst fuel consists of the dry *ḥā* which blazes up with a bright red flame, crackles as if gunpowder had been scattered on it, but it does not form embers and does not maintain the heat. The fuel is collected by the female slaves and women. If the chief has not a sufficient supply of fuel, he sends to the surrounding tents for it, or the men themselves bring it to him.

354 412 332 354 354 574 372 462

FURNISHINGS OF THE WOMEN'S COMPARTMENT

353 The women and the slaves carry all the utensils and vessels into the women's compartment. Carpets and coverlets on which to sleep are placed in the corner against the dividing wall. Sacks containing wheat, barley, dates, butter, salt, sugar, coffee, rice, or *tummen* (a kind of rice), are stored up against the back wall.

251

2:Mustil S-4, 5 (no date) 1928 MD4 Rwala MD4

262 Milk is the chief nutriment of the Rwala. Many families
272 live exclusively on it for months at a time; they suffer hunger when there is no abundant pasture and the camels accordingly have little to eat. As they cannot then provide themselves with other food in the interior of the desert, they seek it in the settled territory. The Rwala say: "We feed our children on the sour milk of our camels, *mnaṭṭemin 'ejâlna min leben ḥelâlna.*"

Fig. 22—A water trough, *ḥawr*, on a camel (see p. 71).

WHEAT AND OTHER GRAINS

609 The Bedouins are convinced
829 that the *fellâḥîn* are obliged
261 to supply them with food. Everywhere the remark may be heard: "The *fellâḥ* must provide food for the Bedouins, *al-bedw 'ejḥathom 'ala-l-fellâḥ.*" If the *fellâḥ* does not give it to them of his own free will, they have the right to take everything they find, and therefore they declare: "Take from the *fellâḥ* whatever ye find (or like), *ḫoḏ min al-fellâḥ mâ lâḥ.*"

251 Before the Rwala depart into the interior of the desert,
574 *jeḥarrešûn*, they provide themselves with wheat necessary for
261 sustenance. The allowance is one load per person, the load being the amount carried by a camel, about 150 kilograms. In addition to this the ordinary Bedouin carries an additional load for his guests. The head chief usually has fifty to sixty loads of flour and wheat, because he has to feed not only numerous guests but also many of his fellow tribesmen whose supplies enemies have stolen. These are known as *ṣa'âf* or *ḫelâl*. The men go from tent to tent and feed as guests; the women beseech the mistress of the tent: "Give me supper, little sister! give me supper! *'aššni jâ ḫajje 'aššni.*" When they receive the wheat they carry it to the children and the sick.

252 From the wheat is prepared every day a food called *'ejš*,
824 bread being rarely baked. The tribesmen grind the wheat grains themselves, only the chiefs taking milled flour into the interior of the desert. The Rwala do not believe that milled flour is genuine wheat, for they say: "Wheat is genuine only as long as it is in grain, al-Kamh alli bâ'ad habben sahik."

2;Musil S-4,5 (no date)1928 MD4 Rwala MD4

as long as it is in grain, *al-ḥmaḥ alli ba'ad ḥabben ṣaḥiḥ*." The wheat is beaten in a wooden mortar, *mikbâš*, with a pestle, *'amûd*, or it is ground in a small mill, *rḥa'*. These mills are made by the Rwala women who hew two pieces of basalt or lava into shape, hollow out an aperture, provide them with an iron axle, *ḳalb*, and make a wooden handle, *ḥâdi*, the mill now being completed. If they wish to use it for grinding, they spread a piece of leather or closely woven stuff, *tfâl*, on the ground, put the mill on it, pick up the grains in the left hand, shake them into the aperture in the upper stone, *al-fouṣḥa*, and the flour falls into the lower one, *at-taḥta*, and upon the outspread rug, *jiḳa'* *'ala-ṭ-tfâl*. While grinding they sing simple songs such as:

FIG. 22—A leather bucket, *delw* (see p. 72).

"As the mill handle turns (and yet does not leave the lower stone, would that this were so among people!) may each woman possess her beloved; *'âd ar-raḥa mâ dîruh killen tâḥoḍ 'aîruh*." Or:

"Today I am grieved, but the servant of the Bountiful is (appointed by him as) our guardian; *al-jowwa ana wadj-'ina 'abd al-kerim muwaṣṣina*."

They never grind for the purpose of storing up supplies; at the most they grind enough to leave something over for bread to be offered to guests for breakfast on the morrow.

If they wish to bake bread, they shake the flour on a *ṣaḥn*-pan (or *'elbe*), salt it, add water, and knead it into a dough in a *maḥmar*. This they mix into a large loaf, take it out of the *maḥmar*, place it on a piece of leather or on a cloak, turn the *maḥmar* or *ṣaḥn* over, pull off a piece of the dough, and from it knead a large thin cake, *teṭaḥḥen*, on the *ṣaḥn*. When it has covered the whole of the *ṣaḥn*, a woman seizes it in both hands and, throwing it up in the air, draws it out more and more, till sometimes it is as thin as paper, *tenaaref tenaîf*. The ready-made cake she places on a *mineḍf*. Before this she takes a deep bulging sheet of iron, *ṣâj*, about

2:Musil S-4, 5 (no date) 1928 MD4 Rwala MD4

252 60 centimeters in diameter, turns it over on three stones above a fire, with a quick movement lays the cake on the convex side, and takes care that it does not burn. A cake of this kind is called *rafîf*; if it is as thin as paper it is called *rahîf*; and if it is thick, *ǧerîm*.

For breakfast they sometimes prepare a thin batter for the guests, and this is poured into the concave side of the *sâǧ* and baked. This bread, called *maṣli*, when fresh tastes almost like our pancakes.

If bread is to be baked quickly, they knead one large cake from the dough, place it on the hot ashes, cover it with them, and light another fire above the ashes. It is turned once or twice and called *ǧamrijje*.

262 252 Leavened bread is eaten only in the cold season. They prepare the loaf in the evening, add a piece of yeast, *ḫâmer*, to the dough, and bake the bread in the morning. The Rwala prefer unleavened bread, *faṭîr*. They like to have the bread always fresh, *ǧedîd*. Bread of yesterday's baking, *bâjet*, must not be given to guests.

In the season of abundance, *rabî'*, they do not bake bread at all, and at other times seldom and usually only for guests. In two-thirds of the tents bread is not baked all the year round, and many of the women taste it only once or twice throughout their lives. They have an expression of praise: "This is the tent of bread; here bread is baked. So and So is very rich and bountiful; he has bread, he is the master of bread, *râ'i-l-ḫubez*."

In addition to milk the Rwala live mostly on *'ejš*. This is boiled from crushed wheat or wheat pounded in a mill. Among the chiefs the wheat is ground into groats, *ǧerîš*. On the crushed or ground wheat water is poured, salt is added, and it is boiled into a thick paste. If they have enough *leben*, the women pour it upon the *'ejš*, *tebajjeẓ al-'ejš*, making *bejâḍ*. *'Ejš* is prepared almost daily for supper. What is left over is served for next day's luncheon and eaten cold, *berîde*.

[184 251] If the Rwala are proceeding on a short journey and know that they will find no tents for two or three days, they roast a little wheat on the *sâǧ*, shake it into a leather sack, and feed on it. This is called *ḫamîse*. As the old men do not have good teeth, instead of roasted wheat grain they take a couple of handfuls of flour and eat this without any preparation. They call it *leḥme*.

2:Musil S-4, 5 (no date)1928 MD4 Rwala MD4

Instead of wheat the poorer of the Rwala obtain white sorghum, *ḏera' bêḍa'*, which costs half as much and can be used in exactly the same way as wheat. From it they bake bread called *ṭurmuḏ*, boil *'ejš* known as *raṣîṣa*, roast the grains to *ḥamîsa*, and eat the plain flour as *lehme*.

FIG. 24—A small tent, *bzz* (see p. 72).

Semḥne or *sebib* is the seed of the different varieties of *semḥ* plant. It takes the place of both wheat and *ḏera'*, and from it food can be prepared in exactly the same way as from these. Those who have no other food and neither taste the seed of the *ad-da'â'* variety of *semḥ* nor eat the *al-ḥawwa'* herb, even though they may be tormented by hunger, are generally regarded as being hardy; *hwa walad mâ ḏâḳ ad-da'â' w-lâ akal al-ḥawwa' jôm ǧâ'*.

LOCUSTS, DATES, SALT, WATER, EDIBLE PLANTS

For the poorer Rwala locusts, *ǧerâd*, are an important article of diet. The large green varieties often cover shrubs by the myriad and do not move till the dew has evaporated. The Rwala women come and throw handfuls of locusts into large bags, tie them up, dig a narrow, deep trench, *bûra*, and make a fire in it. When the bottom of the trench is covered with glowing ashes they shake the locusts into it, shouting: "Father of roasting, roast them! *jâ-ba-l-ḥmes ekmusek*." The dead locusts are dried in the sun and either ground immediately

2:Musil S-4, 5 (no date) 1928 MD4 Rwala MD4

to powder, or strung on long threads, or scooped by hand into leather bags. The locusts taste like the tails of crayfish. They are eaten either without any preparation, *neǧǧân*, or food is prepared from them as from wheat.

In addition to bread, *'ejš*, and locusts the Rwala eat the following:

'aṣide, a gruel made of milk and some flour,

beċile, a paste made from dates and flour,

basise, a thin paste for young children, made of grape honey (*debs*) and wheat flour,

madrûse, a thin paste made of dates, boiled wheat, and butter,

maṭbûḫa, dates boiled in butter,

ḫmeǰ'a, bread boiled in milk and covered with camel's suet.

Burrul, husked wheat, and *ruzz*, rice, are very seldom found with the common Rwala.

The Rwala buy salt in the settlements of the Sirḥân depression. It is obtained in especially large quantities in the environs of Čâf and Eṭra. The settlers run the salt water into shallow pools, collect, *jezabberûn*, the salt left after evaporation into baskets made of palm fibers, *zebîl*, and shake it out in heaps, *ḫawâṣel*. They measure it like corn and sell it. A single camel load (about 150 kilograms) costs a quarter or half a *meǧîdijje*, according to quality, in addition to the tax for the chief. The best varieties of salt are those called *'aẓîẓ* and *eṭrâwi*. Varieties of an inferior quality are known as *sabḫâwi*, which is obtained from the dried-up swamps, and *ṯḫejni*, or ground rock salt, of which there is an abundance in several regions.

For the preparation of food women require water, which they fetch themselves if a well is near, but which is brought by the herdsmen from wells at a great distance. Water is never wasted, and the Rwala look after it carefully, especially when they are on the march. On war expeditions or during raids the commander sees that each one obtains an equal amount of water. At sunset he picks up a pebble, places it in a wooden *ǯedaḥ*, and pours water on it until it is immersed. This is each man's share, *meḳṣûd az-zelema*. If hard pressed the Rwala kill the fattest camel, cut out the paunch, *čarš*, place it on a cloak, and squeeze the liquid from it into a leather bag, allowing it to cool and settle. They either drink it or, if it is too thick, they suck it into their throats through